

1954

026 - Know Your Mother Better

Stanley Mathews

Follow this and additional works at: http://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_reprints



Part of the [Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Mathews, Stanley, "026 - Know Your Mother Better" (1954). *Marian Reprints*. Paper 18.
http://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_reprints/18

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Marian Library Publications at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Marian Reprints by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact frice1@udayton.edu, mschlange1@udayton.edu.



*Know Your
Mother Better*

BROTHER STANLEY MATHEWS, S.M.

Number 26

ABOUT THE AUTHOR . . .

Brother Stanley Mathews, S.M., is the librarian of the Marian Library and an instructor in English at the University of Dayton. He is presently editing the Marian Library series of anthologies, the first volume of which, *The Promised Woman: an anthology of the Immaculate Conception*, was published in May, 1954 (*The Grail*).

Know Your Mother Better originally appeared in *The Marianist*, May, 1954.

The Marian Library
University of Dayton
Dayton, Ohio

A
MARIAN
REPRINT

Know Your Mother Better

By Stanley G. Mathews, S.M.

ABOUT ten years ago the National Nutrition Society published a pamphlet with the intriguing and basically correct title, *You Are What You Eat*. It made the point that the human body needs a constant supply of food because it is always growing physically in some direction, and the kind and the amount of food eaten helps determine that direction.

The same is true of the mind. Your mental development depends largely on the kind of intellectual food you feed it: thus it grows or is retarded.

But when your mind knows little or nothing about Our Lady, you can hardly be said to be developing in devotion as you rightly should. To love Mary truly, you must increase your knowledge of her — knowledge of her place in Catholic dogma, her privileges, her mission in the modern world, her apparitions, the mysteries of her life, her role in salvation. Just as it is impossible to fall in love with someone you do not even know, so it is impossible to love Our Lady unless you get to know her well, and continue to increase in knowledge of her life and mission. Otherwise your devotion very likely will wither or at least become static. The best and easiest way to prevent this is to read about your Blessed Mother.

But your reading must be solid, practical and apostolic, in order that your devotion be solid, practical and apostolic. If you limit yourself to "pious fluff" your devotion will be flabby. If you are preoccupied with the unusual, your devotion will be sentimental and shallow. This is the greatest danger of reading so-called "fringe mariology." You show interest only in externals: details of an apparition instead of its message; neglect of Mary's actual life in favor of an excessive curiosity about her appearances (when she merely comes back to tell us again what she tried to tell us throughout her life).

Not many years ago you had the perfect right to ask if there were many books about Mary worth reading. Surely, there were not many. Suffering from a lack of well written doctrinal material and an overabundance of translated devotional works, the shelf of Mariology in an ordinary library was not very appealing.

But this situation has changed radically in the last fifteen years. Now some fine authors (if not an abundance of them) are writing in English about the glories of Mary. The late William Thomas Walsh, C.C. Martin-dale, Gerald Vann, Bishop Sheen, Maisie Ward, Thomas McGlynn, John

Beevers, and Daniel Sargent, for instance, all fit into this category. Today authors of this caliber are providing excellent books on Our Lady from a variety of viewpoints.

The following list is intended only as a sampling of the best Marian literature available in English. They are works most frequently on call at the Marian Library — books which the Marian Library recommends. As interested laymen and religious, you should have little trouble in working out from it a reading program to "Know Your Mother Better." (A bibliography is included for your information and guidance.)

BIOGRAPHY

The first step in learning about Mary — or any historical personage, for that matter — is to read the story of her life. In the field of biography Franz Willam's *Mary, the Mother of Jesus* is the "standard" life of Our Lady. Based on his wealth of scriptural and archeological knowledge, and his many years' residence in Palestine visiting the Holy Places, this Austrian priest gives a penetrating and readable insight into the life and character of Mary. The story is far from being a scholarly, dry-as-dust treatment of the Blessed Virgin. Fortunately, Father Willam has resisted the temptation to enlarge without reserve on the tantalizingly brief references to Mary found in the Gospels, and at the same time he has avoided emphasizing the purely legendary. The result is a "life" that stands head and shoulders above the rest of the field.

Three other interesting biographies published more recently are *Mary and Joseph* by Denis O'Shea, an Irish priest of the diocese of Meath; *Mary of Nazareth* by Igino Giordani, an historian and librarian of the Vatican Library; and a paper-bound, popularized *Life of Mary: Coredeptrix* by Peter A. Resch, S.M., Provincial of the St. Louis Province of the Marianists.

DOGMA

Most books that deal with the dogmatic and doctrinal foundation of devotion — the science of Mariology — are necessarily phrased in technical terms and couched in language that will strike the average Catholic reader as "heavy." For reference purposes, however, or for reading that requires more serious study, the two-volume *Mariology* of Matthias Joseph Scheeben, and Paul F. Palmer's *Mary in the Documents of the Church* should not be overlooked. Devoting his whole life to the study and teaching of dogma, Father Scheeben has compiled a work that, although written in the last century, remains the classical study of the entire field. In it he sets the pattern for the future study of Mary as an independent part of dogmatic theology. Father Palmer, a Jesuit, has limited himself, on the other hand, to the important documents of the Fathers, the Councils or the Church, and the Popes to show that the special privileges of the Mother of God have been recognized from the dawn of Christianity. Together they give a complete picture of the history of Marian dogmas.

Mary, the Mother of God by O. R. Vassall-Phillips, written more than a quarter of a century ago by the famous English Redemptorist, remains still the finest short work explaining Mary's place in theology.

Bishop Fulton Sheen in *The World's First Love*, recipient of the 1953 Marian Library Medal for the outstanding work written that year about Mary, gives a brilliant combination of dogma and devotion. The Bishop writes of Mary as the prototype and exemplar whom every man really loves, whether he is aware of it or not, whenever he loves a woman.

Other readable works, only somewhat technically phrased, are Canon Smith's *Mary's Part in Our Redemption*, a clear explanation of Our Lady's Role as Co-Redemptrix; M. M. Phillipon's *The Mother of God*, a

handbook of Mariology which shows a happy blending of solid content and wide appeal; and *Our Lady of Wisdom* by Maurice Zundel, a successful attempt by a Swiss Benedictine to work upon the doctrines that concern Mary to find out what they can tell the modern world, and how they can help solve the special problems that today beset us.

The two most recent works of note in this field are *Mary in Doctrine* by Emil Neubert, S.M., and *Mary in Our Life* by William G. Most. Father Neubert, former director of the Marianist seminary in Switzerland, has numerous Marian works to his credit. The original French publication of this work is now in its third edition. Father Most, professor of the classics at Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa, has written his book as an integrated outline of Marian devotion and doctrine.

An important project now under way is a three-volume set on Mariology being prepared by American scholars under the editorship of Father Juniper B. Carol, O.F.M., America's foremost Mariologist. The set, first work in English of its kind, is scheduled for publication by Bruce late in 1954 and 1955.

DEVOTION TO MARY

Heading any list of works explaining the why and wherefore of devotion to Mary is *My Ideal, Jesus Son of Mary*, by Father Neubert. A popularization of the doctrine of filial piety, the special devotion of William Joseph Chaminade, this little Marian classic has appeared in fifteen languages. Father Neubert draws a blueprint for living under the leadership of the Blessed Virgin for every son and daughter of Mary, and points out what the imitation of Jesus' love means. For those who have never read Father Neubert's little book, the Marian Year offers the finest occasion for delving into its treasures. In fact, a re-reading during this year will help bring a renewal of fervor and conse-

cration for those who have already profited by *My Ideal*.

All American Catholics know that the United States is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin under the title of Immaculate Conception. Too few, however, are aware of the origin of devotion to Mary in our country. Daniel Sargent has helped to fill that gap by tracing in *Our Land and Our Lady* eleven chapters of the history of devotion of our ancestors.

Fray Angelico Chavez, O.F.M., writing the "autobiography" of an old wooden statue which has been venerated in our country for more than 300 years, traces much of the history of Spanish-American devotion to Mary in *La Conquistadora*, a book worth reading both for its superior literary quality and its historical and devotional content.

Our Lady in Our Life by M. V. Bernadot, a renowned French Dominican, is a beautiful study of the maternal love of Our Lady for her children, and of the way in which this love leads all to the life of grace.

Caryll Houselander's writing has always been permeated with a profound understanding of the Mystical Body. In her most popular work, *The Reed of God*, she uses the simple reed, growing by the river bank, as a symbol of the Blessed Virgin. Miss Houselander has the facility of writing with a freshness and a vitality which appeals to the average Catholic reader.

Two older works of devotion are *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary* in which St. Louis Grignion de Montfort outlines his famous doctrine of "Holy Slavery," and *The Glories of Mary* by St. Alphonsus Liguori, which has gone through countless editions since first published in 1750 in Naples.

SPECIAL DEVOTIONS TO MARY

Those who love Mary will want to express it by practicing special devo-

tions in her honor. Unfortunately, books of devotions which can be highly recommended are not numerous. In general, the quality of devotional writing is far inferior to the quantity. Many of the books are translations of foreign works — works intended for readers of a different mentality and their style does not appeal to the American mind.

Two books by Franz Willam, *The Rosary: Its History and Meaning* and *The Rosary in Daily Life*, give the best approach to the meaning of the Rosary now available in English. Father Willam artistically interweaves history with his primarily devotional and meditative treatment.

In *The Splendor of the Rosary* Maisie Ward uses reproductions of Fra Angelico's paintings as the backdrop for her meditations on the rosary and the prayers composed by Caryl Houselander. Especially noteworthy are the excellent introductory chapters on the background of the rosary.

The new edition of *Mary in Her Scapular Promise* by John M. Haffert remains the best work on that devotion and Gerald Vann's *The Seven Swords* surpasses any other work now in print on the sorrows of Mary. However, the popular meditations on the seven sorrows of Our Lady and their meaning for the twentieth-century man, *The Splendor of Sorrow*, by former newspaperman Eddie Doherty has recently become available in a paper-bound Lumen Book.

Our Lady's Litany by Rev. Aloysius Biskupek, S.V.D., is a series of readings and reflections on the titles of the Litany of Loreto. The most recent book on the litany, Father Biskupek's work is valuable mainly because of the practical applications for modern living which he draws from each invocation.

ANTHOLOGIES

The most complete and the most discriminating anthology of poetry on Our Lady is *I Sing of a Maiden*, edi-

ted by Sister M. Therese. It has a carefully balanced selection of older and modern poems, but always the quality is excellent. For this reason this collection is recommended over all other similar anthologies.

A best seller from Sheed and Ward, *The Mary Book*, assembled by Frank Sheed, covers almost every phase of Mariology. Art, poetry, and doctrine are represented, ranging from Chesterton's "Mary and the Convert" to Henri Godin's "A Priest's Litany."

Elizabeth Rothenstein has compiled a reasonably priced anthology of art and poetry, *The Virgin and the Child*. Outstanding for 22 beautiful reproductions of less familiar masterpieces of art, it features poems by Chaucer, Belloc, Hopkins, Milton, Hardy and St. John of the Cross.

These three volumes would be a worthwhile base upon which to build your own personal Marian library.

SHRINES AND MIRACLES

Perhaps the richest division of Marian books is the wealth of good literature now available on the shrines and apparitions of Our Lady. Many of our most talented Catholic writers, including numerous laymen, have produced notable works in this field.

Two fine books which bring a number of apparitions of the Blessed Mother together are John Beevers' *The Sun Her Mantle* and Don Sharkey's *The Woman Shall Conquer*. Beevers' work is concerned with the nine places where Our Lady appeared from 1830 to 1933 in France, Belgium, Ireland, and Portugal. He gives extensive treatment particularly to La Salette. Sharkey's book is the story of the Blessed Virgin in the modern world seen through the eyes of a reporter. All of her appearances since 1830 are included, the author stressing the significance of each one.

H. M. Gillett's two volumes, *Famous Shrines of Our Lady*, provide a competent treatment of 58 of the leading shrines of the world, with a

bibliography and illustrations for each included. Painstaking research and an interesting style make the writing of this English convert authoritative yet pleasant reading. The newly published *Catholic Shrines of the United States and Canada* by Francis Beuchesne Thornton contains some 30 Marian shrines among the 119 listed. While only one-fourth of the book is about Marian shrines, there is no more complete work available on North American shrines of Our Lady.

Of the 50 or more books on Fatima in English four are of special value. *Our Lady of Fatima* by William Thomas Walsh should be read first because its style gives an easy-to-grasp, over-all picture and makes appealing reading.

The Immaculate Heart by Father John de Marchi adds many details and much documentation to the story of Fatima. The author's seven years' residence at Fatima gave him the chance to know Lucy personally and to strike up a personal acquaintance with the villagers. Put into popular English by William Fay, this book often goes behind the facts of the eventful moments at Fatima.

More specialized is *Vision of Fatima* by Thomas McGlynn, O.P. Written as a result of a trip to Portugal to secure the approval of Lucy for a statue he had sculptured of Our Lady of Fatima, Father McGlynn clears up many of the finer points of the story.

The Meaning of Fatima by C. C. Martindale, S.J., is a critical study which analyses the entire story. Beginning with the Church's stand on private revelations, it proceeds to perhaps the most intelligent appreciation of Fatima yet published.

St. Bernadette and Lourdes have also had their share of books. Unfortunately the best complete treatments of the apparitions by Estrade, Huysmans and Lasserre are no longer in print in the United States. But most people know the story through prob-

ably the best novel ever written on a Marian theme, Franz Werfel's *Song of Bernadette*. Don Sharkey's *After Bernadette* complements the Werfel story and brings it up to date, as does *The Happy Grotto* by Fulton Oursler, although both admittedly are incomplete treatments. *We Saw Her* by B. G. Sandhurst is an account of the apparitions from the viewpoint of the men and women who knelt with Bernadette in the cave at Massabielle on the days of the visions.

The well known novelist Frances Parkinson Keyes has written an excellent life of St. Bernadette, *Bernadette of Lourdes*, formerly titled *The Sublime Shepherdess*, and her work on Guadalupe, *The Grace of Guadalupe*, is the finest retelling of the story of the patroness of Mexico.

While there have been dozens of books in French on LaSalette, relatively few have appeared in the United States. Of these Father John Kennedy's *Light on the Mountain* is the best. Another recent study, though less valuable on all accounts, *The Story of LaSalette* by James P. O'Reilly, M.S., has been issued in a less expensive, paper-bound Lumen Book.

THE MARIAN APOSTOLATE

Outstanding in this important but meagerly documented field, highlighted only recently by contemporary writers, is the inspiring story of Our Lady's Army, *The Legion of Mary*, well told by Cecily Hallack. Because the book was written in 1939, 17 years after the Legion came into existence in Dublin with 15 members, its eventual expansion to every continent of the globe had to be chronicled in an additional chapter by Father Michael O'Carroll for the 1950 edition.

Required reading for all apostles of Mary should be the remarkable little book by Bishop Leon Suenens, *Theology of the Apostolate*. By outlining the doctrines and their implications which are the foundation of the Le-

gion's work to lead souls "to Jesus through Mary," this powerful work almost impels you to participate in the special mission which God has confided to Mary: the salvation of the world.

The Presence of Mary by Francis Charnot and *Queen of Militants* by Emil Neubert are two more works which explain clearly and simply Our Lady's role in the lay apostolate.

Four biographies, in particular, of

great apostles of Mary offer apostolic example and inspirational reading: Marie Winowska's *Our Lady's Fool*, the story of Father Maximillian Kolbe, O.F.M.Conv.; Katherine Burton's *Chaminade, Apostle of Mary*; George Regault's *St. Louis de Montfort* and Mary Fabyan Windeatt's *The Medal*. This last, written especially for young people, will interest all readers with its story of St. Catherine Laboure and the Miraculous Medal.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Life of the Blessed Virgin

- Willam, Franz: *Mary, the Mother of Jesus*. St. Louis, Herder, 1944. \$4.00
 O'Shea, Denis: *Mary and Joseph*. Milwaukee, Bruce, 1949. \$3.50
 Giordani, Igino: *Mary of Nazareth*. New York, Macmillan, 1947. \$2.75
 Resch, Peter: *Life of Mary: Coredemptrix*. Milwaukee, Bruce, 1954. \$1.00

Mary in Dogma

- Scheeben, Matthias: *Mariology*. 2 vols. St. Louis, Herder, 1946. \$3.00 each
 Palmer, Paul F.: *Mary in the Documents of the Church*. Westminster, Md., Newman, 1952. \$2.25
 Doheny, William J., ed.: *Papal Documents on Mary*. Milwaukee, Bruce, 1954. \$4.50
 Smith, George: *Mary's Part in Our Redemption*. New York, Kenedy, 1954. \$3.00
 Phillipon, M. M.: *The Mother of God*. Westminster, Md., Newman, 1953. \$3.00
 Zundel, Maurice: *Our Lady of Wisdom*. New York, Sheed and Ward, 1944. o.p.
 Vassall-Phillips, O. R.: *Mary, the Mother of God*. New York, Macmillan, o.p.
 Sheen, Fulton J.: *The World's First Love*. New York, Garden City Books, 1953. \$1.49
 Neubert, Emil: *Mary in Doctrine*. Milwaukee, Bruce, 1954. \$3.50
 Mathews, Stanley, ed.: *The Promised Woman*. St. Meinrad, Ind., The Grail, 1954. \$4.00
 Most, William G.: *Mary in Our Life*. New York, Kenedy, 1954. \$4.00

Devotion to Mary

- Neubert, Emil: *My Ideal, Jesus, Son of Mary*. Kirkwood, Mo., Maryhurst Press, 1947. \$.25
 Bernadot, M. V.: *Our Lady in Our Life*. Westminster, Md., Newman, 1949. \$2.75
 Houselander, Caryll: *The Reed of God*. New York, Sheed and Ward, 1944. \$2.25
 Grignion de Montfort, St. Louis: *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary*. Bay Shore, N. Y., Montfort Fathers, 1947. \$1.50
 Alphonsus Ligouri, St.: *The Glories of Mary*. Esopus, N. Y., Redemptorist Fathers, 1931. \$2.00
 Sargent, Daniel: *Our Land and Our Lady*. New York, Longmans, Green, 1939. \$3.00
 Chavez, Fray Angelico: *La Conquistadora*. Paterson, N. J., St. Anthony Guild Press, 1954. \$2.00

Marian Devotions

- Willam, Franz: *The Rosary: its history and meaning*. New York, Benziger, 1953. \$3.50
Willam, Franz: *The Rosary in Daily Life*. New York, Benziger, 1953. \$3.50
Ward, Maisie: *The Splendor of the Rosary*. New York, Sheed and Ward, 1945. \$2.50
Haffert, John M.: *Mary in Her Scapular Promise*. Washington, N. J., Ave Maria Institute, 1954. \$2.50
Vann, Gerald: *The Seven Swords*. New York, Sheed and Ward, 1953. \$3.00
Doherty, Eddie: *The Splendor of Sorrows*. Chicago, Paluch Publications, 1953. \$.25
Biskupek, Aloysius: *Our Lady's Litany*. Milwaukee, Bruce, 1954. \$2.75

Anthologies

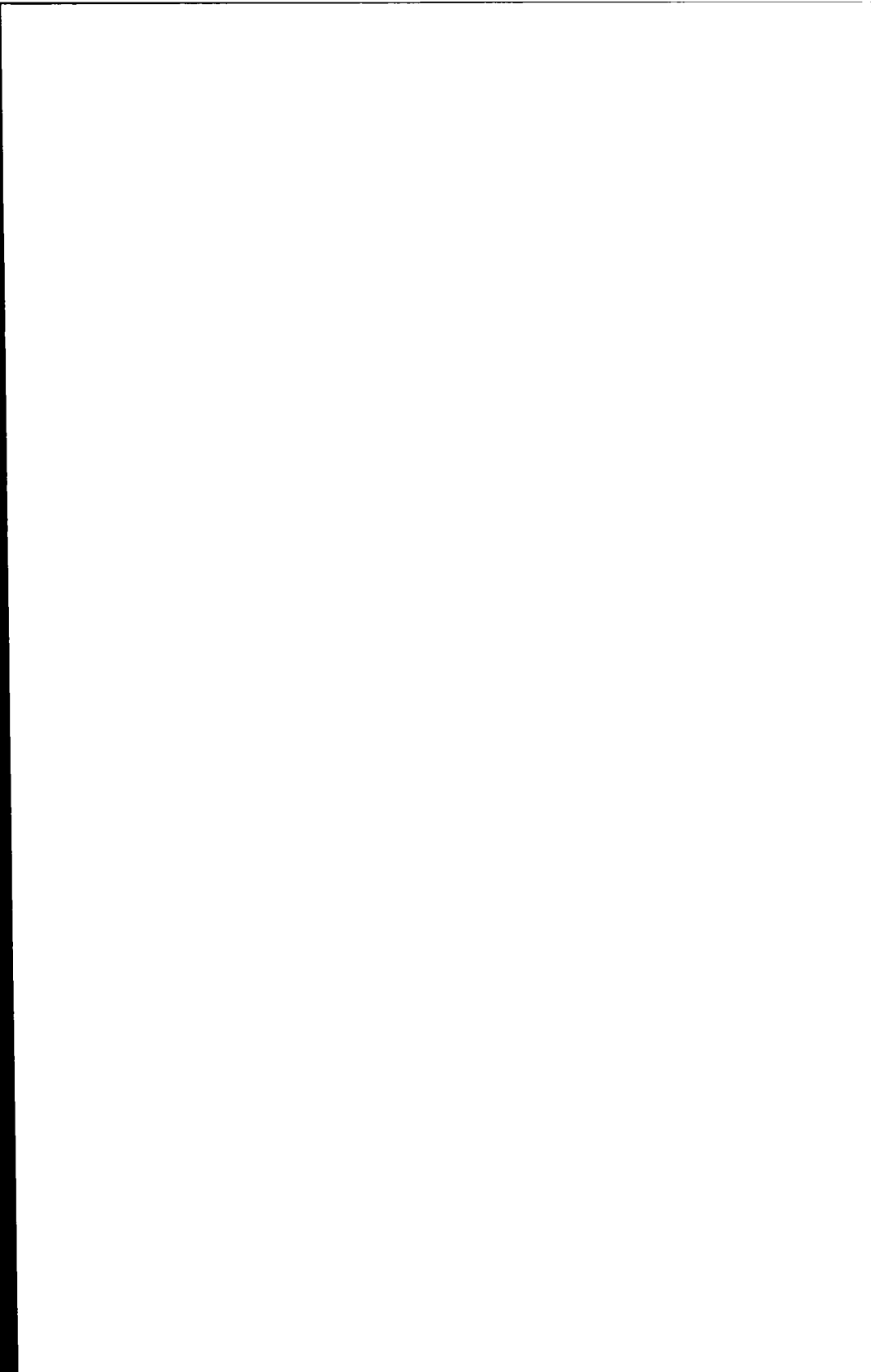
- Therese, Sister M.: *I Sing of a Maiden*. New York, Macmillan, 1947. \$4.00
Sheed, Frank J., ed.: *The Mary Book*. New York, Sheed and Ward, 1950. \$4.00
Rothenstein, Elizabeth: *The Virgin and the Child*. New York, Scribners, 1951. \$3.00

Shrines and Miracles

- Beevers, John: *The Sun Her Mantle*. Westminster, Md., Newman, 1953. \$3.25
Sharkey, Don: *The Woman Shall Conquer*. Milwaukee, Bruce, 1952. \$3.75
Gillett, H. M.: *Famous Shrines of Our Lady*. 2 vols. Westminster, Md., Newman, 1949-1952. \$3.00 each
Thornton, Francis B.: *Catholic Shrines of the United States and Canada*. New York, Funk, 1954. \$4.75
Walsh, William Thomas: *Our Lady of Fatima*. New York, Macmillan, 1947. \$2.75
(also available in the paper-bound Image Book series, published by Doubleday, \$.35)
Marchi, John de: *The Immaculate Heart*. New York, Farrar, Straus, 1952. \$3.50
McGlynn, Thomas: *Vision of Fatima*. New York, Garden City Books, 1951. \$1.25
Martindale, C. C.: *The Meaning of Fatima*. New York, Kenedy, 1950. \$2.50
Oursler, Fulton: *The Happy Grotto*. New York, McMullen, 1948. \$1.50
Sharkey, Don: *After Bernadette*. Milwaukee, Bruce, 1945. \$2.00
Werfel, Franz: *Song of Bernadette*. New York, Viking, 1942. \$4.00
(also available in the paper-bound Pocket Book series, Cardinal edition, \$.35)
Sandhurst, B. G.: *We Saw Her*. New York, Longmans, Green, 1953. \$3.00
Keyes, Frances P.: *Bernadette of Lourdes*. New York, Messner, 1953. \$3.50
Keyes, Frances P.: *The Grace of Guadalupe*. New York, Messner, 1953. \$3.50
Kennedy, John S.: *Light on the Mountain*. New York, McMullen, 1953. \$3.00
O'Reilly, James: *The Story of LaSalette*. Chicago, Paluch Publications, 1953. \$.50

Marian Apostolate

- Hallack, Cecily: *The Legion of Mary*. New York, Crowell, 1950. \$3.00
Suenens, Leon: *Theology of the Apostolate*. Cork, Ireland, Mercier Press, 1953. \$1.25
Charmot, Francis: *The Presence of Mary*. Chicago, Fides, 1949. \$2.50
Neubert, Emil: *Queen of Militants*. St. Meinrad, Ind., The Grail, 1947. \$2.00
Winowska, Marie: *Our Lady's Fool*. Westminster, Md., Newman, 1952. \$3.00
Burton, Katherine: *Chaminade, Apostle of Mary*. Milwaukee, Bruce, 1949. \$3.00
Rigault, George: *St. Louis de Montfort*. Bay Shore, N. Y., Montfort Fathers, 1947. \$2.00
Windeatt, Mary F.: *The Medal*. St. Meinrad, Ind., The Grail, 1950. \$2.00



THESE MARIAN REPRINTS ARE STILL AVAILABLE

- No. 3 — Neubert, S.M., Rev. Emil: Mary and the Apostolate
- No. 4 — Huault, S.M., Rev. Placid: The Imitation of Mary
- No. 6 — Agius, O.P., Rev. Joseph: Fatima — In Battle Array
- No. 7 — Willock, Ed: Men, Mary, and Manliness
- No. 8 — Connell, C.Ss.R., Rev. Francis: Mary, Conceived Without Sin
- No. 9 — Pius XII: Russia and the Immaculate Heart
- No. 10 — Knopp, S.M., Bro. Robert: Mary, Our Inspiration to Action
- No. 15 — Griffin, John J.: Mary, Patroness of Catholic Action
- No. 18 — Doherty, Catherine de Hueck: Our Lady of Russia
- No. 19 — Goodier, S.J., Archbishop Alban: The Witness of Our Lady
- No. 20 — Pius XII: Fulgens Corona
- No. 21 — Ohlmann, O.F.M., Rev. Ralph: The Immaculate Conception and the United States
- No. 22 — Hoelle, S.M., Rev. Philip: The Immaculate Conception and the Apostolate
- No. 23 — Pius IX: Ineffabilis Deus
- No. 24 — Totten, S.M., Bro. John: Mary's Apostolic Role in History
- No. 25 — Pius X: Ad Diem Illum

